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LIEUTENANT COLONEL AND COLONEL COMMAND
DECLINATIONS DURING FY 79.

by

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Lieutenant Colonel James A. Musselman Inf
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perception of why officers decline command included family, OPMS, fear of failure, inability to influence slating process, 20-year retirement, and imbalance in the price to pay versus the satisfaction of being a commander. Most officers were positive about CCSS and publishing the selection list.

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USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM PAPER

LIEUTENANT COLONEL AND COLONEL COMMAND
DECLINATIONS DURING FY 79.

by

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US Army War College
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013
May 1980

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Command of troops is a duty with important responsibilities. There is a responsibility to the mission, the soldiers, the soldiers' families, and the community. The commander must represent the very best that our selection process can produce. Accordingly, when a selectee declines, the Army suffers a loss. With the decline of available commands and the furtherance of OPMS goals vis a vis promotions and advanced schooling, the perception that command is a mark of success may be diminished. If, as a result, the number of command declinations increases, we believe a significant problem will arise. It is with this thought that the study was undertaken and our analysis made.

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PREFACE

This Group Study Project was produced under the aegis of the US Army War College Military Studies Program. The general methodology and survey instrument were designed by the authors and approved by the College and the US Army Military Personnel Center. The research effort is designed to support the study of professionalism in the officer corps. The authors of the study elected to participate based on a personal interest in the subject matter. The outstanding assistance of the personnel at the Carlisle Barracks Computer Center and US Army Military Personnel Center were major factors in our being able to complete this project.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

In the past two years there has been an increase in the number of lieutenant colonels and colonels who have declined to accept battalion and brigade level command. Although there appeared to be high level interest in senior officer declinations, no systematic study of the issue had been initiated. We believed that the study of command declination by senior officers potentially could enhance the ongoing US Army War College military professionalism study and serve as a useful start point for meaningful changes where and if required.

Our literature search revealed the following policy information. The present policy allows declination for command consideration prior to the command selection board convening. This policy allows those officers, not desiring command at that time, an opportunity (without prejudice) to remove their names from board consideration and still be eligible for consideration by subsequent boards. Few officers have taken advantage of the opportunity to decline command prior to the convening of the board. In an attempt to determine potential declinations prior to consideration, MILPERCEN is now writing a personal letter to recently promoted officers requesting that they state in writing if they desire to be considered for command in their new grade.

Officers may decline command at any time prior to actual assumption of command. Declination of command, once selected, eliminates the officer from consideration for all future command or project management. This policy was reaffirmed by the DCSPER on 8 December 1978 and supported by the

MACOMs in the Sep 79 Officers Systems Analysis Study Group on Centralized Command Selection Procedures.

Lieutenant Colonel declinations during FY 78 and FY 79 were 6.5 percent and 10 percent respectively. Colonel declinations during FY 78 and FY 79 were 10.1 percent and 21 percent. It is important to note that the number of individuals involved is small and therefore the data is statistically sensitive.

It should be noted that since the study was initiated, the command tour length has been changed and the Centralized Command Selection System process has been modified to permit more participation by the MACOM commanders.

PURPOSE

The purpose was determined to be twofold, to determine why senior officers accept or decline command and to answer contemporary questions about command, commanders, and the Centralized Selection System.

QUESTIONNAIRE DEVELOPMENT

Initial data received from MILPERCEN showed that the declination rate for 05/06 command positions had increased from 10.1 percent in 1978 to 21.1 percent in 1979 for colonels and from 6.5 percent in 1978 to 10 percent in 1979 for lieutenant colonels. Discussions between the study group and MILPERCEN action officers also revealed that probable reasons for command declination included: plans to retire, personal and family considerations, desire to remain in alternate specialty, desire not to PCS overseas, and type of command.

After reviewing the 1979 Army War College Professionalism Study findings and considering the probable reasons for command declinations as perceived by MILPERCEN, the study group decided to develop the questionnaire around five broad areas: demographic, professional, personal, family attitudes, and perceptions. With the assistance of Dr. Donald Penner, of the Army War College staff, the study group developed a questionnaire which included 66 questions. The questionnaire was tested on Army War College students, coordinated with MILPERCEN, and subsequently approved by the Department of Army.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

SURVEY DEVELOPMENT

To maintain the personal nature of the survey, the study group elected to prepare data processing input based on the survey results rather than mailing a data reduction form with the survey. The data reduction forms were prepared by the study group members. This greatly increased the input accuracy.

ANALYSIS PLAN

From the input data, two master files were produced, responses from LTCs and COLs. The files were further separated for analysis by those who accepted command and those who declined command. Further file separations were made based on various demographic issues. However, it was determined that the creation of these separate files for analysis did not accurately represent the entire population. Therefore, the analysis was made using only the master 05 or 06 output rather than attempting to cross compare by age, branch etc.

Although the numbers were small, they represent the total population. Caution must be exercised when reviewing the data because of density of response. Any assumption or conclusions drawn on this rather small sample may not be statistically valid.

Findings were derived by cross tabulation of input data using computer techniques and analysis of written comments received from respondents.

CHAPTER III

FINDINGS FOR 06 RESPONDENTS

GENERAL

As discussed in the study introduction, there were 157 colonel(06) command positions available in FY 79. Surveys were mailed by USAWC to 174 colonels who were offered command either as primary or alternate selectees. Of those mailed, 137 were returned for evaluation for a 79 percent rate.

Data provided by MILPERCEN reflected that of those 06s nominated in FY 79, 33 declined (21 percent). Nineteen declinees returned the survey for evaluation (65 percent).

It is important to note here, that our data has not been collected to support or refute the MILPERCEN statistics. The purpose of this evaluation is to ascertain reasons for declination and potential solutions.

The data base is structured to provide general analysis of CA/CSA and CSS acceptance and declination response.

The following specific results relate only to 06 acceptees and declinees.

SPECIFICS

Sources of Commission.

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
19.0%	- Service Academy	31.6%
62.8%	- ROTC	36.8%
16.8%	- OCS	26.3%
1.5%	- Other/Direct	5.3%

Comment: This data is only provided for general review. No attempt was made to cross file or reference those from various source categories eligible for selection per year group or selected.

Median Years of Commissioned Service

<u>ACCEPTED</u>	<u>DECLINED</u>
22.1 Years	24.0 Years

Comment: No definite trend can be ascertained because of the single year of data. Recommend this be reviewed in subsequent analysis. However, those who declined had more years of service.

Median of Family Members Living with Respondent.

<u>ACCEPTED</u>	<u>DECLINED</u>
2.8	2.8

Median Number of Family Relocations During Last Ten Years.

<u>ACCEPTED</u>	<u>DECLINED</u>
5.4	4.8

Comment: The statistics presented indicate that the number of relocations appear to have little influence in the command declination decisions.

Primary or Alternate Selectee for Command.

Comment: Of those respondees who indicated declination of command, 89 percent were primary selectees for command.

I have received (circle one) 1, 2, 3, or no below the zone promotions.

The median number of below the zone promotion was:

<u>ACCEPTED</u>	<u>DECLINED</u>
1.9	1.1

Median years since last troop experience.

<u>AC</u> <u>ES</u>	<u>DECLINEES</u>
3.5	5.5

Comment: The value range went from 0 to 19 for acceptees; and 0-10 for declinees. Declinees had been away from troops longer.

Type unit for which selected.

	<u>ACCEPTEES</u>	<u>DECLINEES</u>
TOE	59.1	31.6
TDA	38.0	63.2
OTHER	2.9	5.3

Type command for which selected

	<u>ACCEPTED</u>	<u>DECLINED</u>
CA	48.2	44.4
CSA	29.2	33.3
CSS	22.6	22.2

Initially declined command.

Comment: 68.4 percent declined after being slated. 10.5 percent declined after being selected but before being slated. Review of input revealed that 13 of 19 declined after being slated.

Primary reason for declining command.

Personal 15.8%
Professional 10.5%
Family 10.5%
Combination 52.6%
Other 10.5%

Comment: 89.5 percent of the responses indicate that reasons for declination were either personal, professional, family, or a combination of the above.

How did command fit in with your personal goals at the time of selection?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
0.7	Very Negative	0
1.5	Negative	10.5
1.5	Neutral	15.8
9.5	Positive	26.3
86.9	Very positive	47.4

Comment: The display shows the trend from negative to positive. Those who declined did not do so because it did not fit in with their personal goals.

What was the influence of your previous command experience on your decision to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
.7	Moderate to Decline	3.3
8.0	Neutral	26.3
7.3	Moderate to Accept	0
83.2	Strong to Accept	68.4

Do you plan to retire within the next year?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
4.4	Yes	42.1
93.4	No	57.9

Had you decided to retire when you were selected for command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
5.8	Yes	15.8
94.2	No	84.2

Did your personal health influence your decision to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
9.5	Yes	15.8
90.5	No	78.9

Comment: The survey data could not establish whether the declinates were actually stating that bad or ill health influenced their decision to decline.

Did the command tour length influence your decision to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
2.2	Moderate to Decline	10.5
78.8	Neutral	78.9
8.8	Moderate to Accept	0
10.2	Strong to Accept	10.5

Comment: Command tour length seems to be acceptable with the overall response in the neutral zone.

Did the geographical location of the command influence your decision to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
2.2	Strong to Decline	15.8
7.3	Moderate to Decline	26.3
65.0	Neutral	52.6
10.9	Moderate to Accept	5.3
14.6	Strong to Accept	0

Did your notion of the 06/05 level command environment affect your decision to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
.7	Strong to Decline	15.8
4.4	Moderate to Decline	10.5
45.3	Neutral	42.1
14.6	Moderate to Accept	5.3
35.0	Strong to Accept	26.3

How important was the timing of the offer of command in your decision to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
1.5	Strong to Decline	26.3
4.4	Moderate to Decline	15.8
53.3	Neutral	47.4
18.2	Moderate to Accept	5.3
22.6	Strong to Accept	5.3

Comment: Although isolated alternate list activations indicated that this was a negative problem in their circumstance, the response could not be balanced against other negative attitudinal opinions except, perhaps, in the area of influence of school-age children which have indications of some moderate to strong declination tendencies.

Did the type of command (e.g., entry specialty vs other specialty) influence your decision to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
.7	Strong to Decline	21.1
5.1	Moderate to Decline	5.3
37.2	Neutral	47.4

17.5	Moderate to Accept	5.3
39.4	Strong to Accept	21.1

How did the personality of the person or persons you would be working for or with affect your decision to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
1.5	Strong to Decline	5.3
2.9	Moderate to Decline	10.5
76.6	Neutral	73.7
6.6	Moderate to Accept	5.3
12.4	Strong to Accept	5.3

How did the type of command (TRADOC, FORSCOM, DARCOM, etc.) influence your decision to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
.7	Strong to Decline	15.8
5.8	Moderate to Decline	15.8
48.2	Neutral	42.1
13.9	Moderate to Accept	5.3
30.7	Strong to Accept	21.1

How adequate was your previous military training and experience in preparing you for the type of command for which you were selected?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
1.5	Very Inadequate	0
1.5	Inadequate	10.5
2.2	Neutral	5.3
25.5	Adequate	26.3
69.3	Very Adequate	57.9

Did the presence of school-age family members in the household influence your decision to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
5.1	Strong to Decline	15.8
8.0	Moderate to Decline	15.8
57.7	Neutral	36.8
8.8	Moderate to Accept	0
5.1	Strong to Accept	0
15.3	N/A	31.6

Did the health of family members influence your decision to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
2.2	Strong to Decline	5.3
5.1	Moderate to Decline	5.3
81.8	Neutral	78.9
5.8	Moderate to Accept	0
5.1	Strong to Accept	10.5

Did your wife's employment influence your decision to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
1.5	Strong to Decline	0
5.1	Moderate to Decline	15.8
48.9	Neutral	26.3
1.5	Moderate to Accept	0
3.6	Strong to Accept	0
39.4	N/A	57.9

Comment: Wife's employment appeared to be a somewhat negative influence for those who declined. Sample size is too small to make a further evaluation.

What is your immediate family's attitude toward the Army?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
1.5	Very Negative	0
5.1	Negative	15.8
2.2	Neutral	10.5
43.1	Positive	26.3
49.2	Very Positive	47.4

What was your immediate family's attitude toward your being a commander at the time of your selection?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
.7	Very Negative	0
4.4	Negative	5.3
2.9	Neutral	31.6
28.5	Positive	26.3
63.5	Very Positive	36.8

Comment: Family attitudes are positive toward the Army.

Did your family directly influence your decision to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
40.9	Not at all	57.9
5.1	Toward Declining	26.3
54.0	Toward Accepting	15.8

How did owning a home influence your decision to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
2.2	Strong to Decline	5.3
6.6	Moderate to Decline	5.3
62.0	Neutral	52.6
2.9	Moderate to Accept	0
2.2	Strong to Accept	0
24.1	N/A	36.8

Did the number of relocations your family has made influence your decision to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
2.2	Strong to Decline	10.5
11.7	Moderate to Decline	21.1
71.5	Neutral	63.2
.7	Moderate to Accept	0
2.9	Strong to Accept	0
10.9	N/A	5.3

Comment: Acceptees indicated 72 percent neutral response. The declinees indicated 63 percent neutral response. In both cases the trend toward declining command was evident with 14 percent of acceptees indicating moderate to strong declination tendencies and 32 percent of the declinees ranging in the same area.

Indicate your perception regarding your chances for promotion to the next grade if you decline command.

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
Lower than Most		
46.7	1	84.2
23.4	2	10.5
16.8	3	0
Same as Peers		
4.4	4	0
5.8	5	0
1.5	6	5.3
Higher than Most		
.7	7	0
0	8	0
0	9	0

Indicate your perception regarding your chances for promotion to the next grade if you accept command.

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
Lower than Most		
.7	1	0
.7	2	0
0	3	10.5
Same as Peers		
0	4	0
12.4	5	10.5
8.0	6	26.3

Higher than Most

30.7	7	10.5
27.0	8	21.1
20.4	9	21.1

Have those factors which influenced your decision to accept or decline command changed since you made your decision?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
78.1	Not at All	89.5
8.8	Slightly	0
10.9	Moderately	0
.7	Greatly	10.5
1.5	Very Greatly	0

If you were permitted at this time to reconsider your decision to accept or decline command, would your decision be different?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
83.2	Definitely Not	78.9
8.8	Probably	10.5
2.2	Not Sure	0
2.9	Probably Yes	5.3
2.9	Definitely Yes	5.3

Should officers be permitted to decline consideration for command without adversely affecting subsequent personnel decisions?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
26.3	Definitely Not	21.1
24.8	Probably Not	21.1
5.1	Not Sure	10.5
21.9	Probably Yes	10.5
21.9	Definitely Yes	36.8

Should an officer be allowed to decline command without prejudice
after being slated for a particular command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
35.8	Definitely Not	15.8
29.9	Probably Not	42.1
4.4	Not Sure	0
15.3	Probably Yes	5.3
14.6	Definitely Yes	36.8

How do you feel about publication of the Centralized Command Selection
List?

Comment: 79 percent of all respondees indicated that the command list should be published.

Indicate your perception regarding the Centralized Command Selection
System (CCSS) vs the "Old Boy Net" for selecting commanders.

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
Old Boy Net Best		
4.4	1	10.5
.7	2	0
2.6	3	5.3
Both the Same		
0	4	0
8.0	5	15.8
5.1	6	5.3
CCSS Best		
11.7	7	10.5
23.4	8	15.8
43.1	9	36.8

Did you decline command because you believed that you could make a greater contribution to the Army in a noncommand job?

Comment: Three of the nineteen respondees who declined command indicated that they declined command for a noncommand job.

Indicate your feeling about the recently announced command tour length.

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
7.3	Very Negative	10.5
13.1	Negative	15.8
8.8	Neutral	26.3
35.8	Positive	26.3
34.4	Very Positive	21.1

Would you have accepted command if you knew that the tour length would be 30 months + 6 months?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINFD</u>
87.6	Yes	42.1
8.0	Not Sure	15.8
4.4	No	36.8*

Note: *One declinee response was in error which equates to 5.3 percent of declinee total value.

Indicate types of assignments that would enable you to make the greatest contribution to the total Army effort.

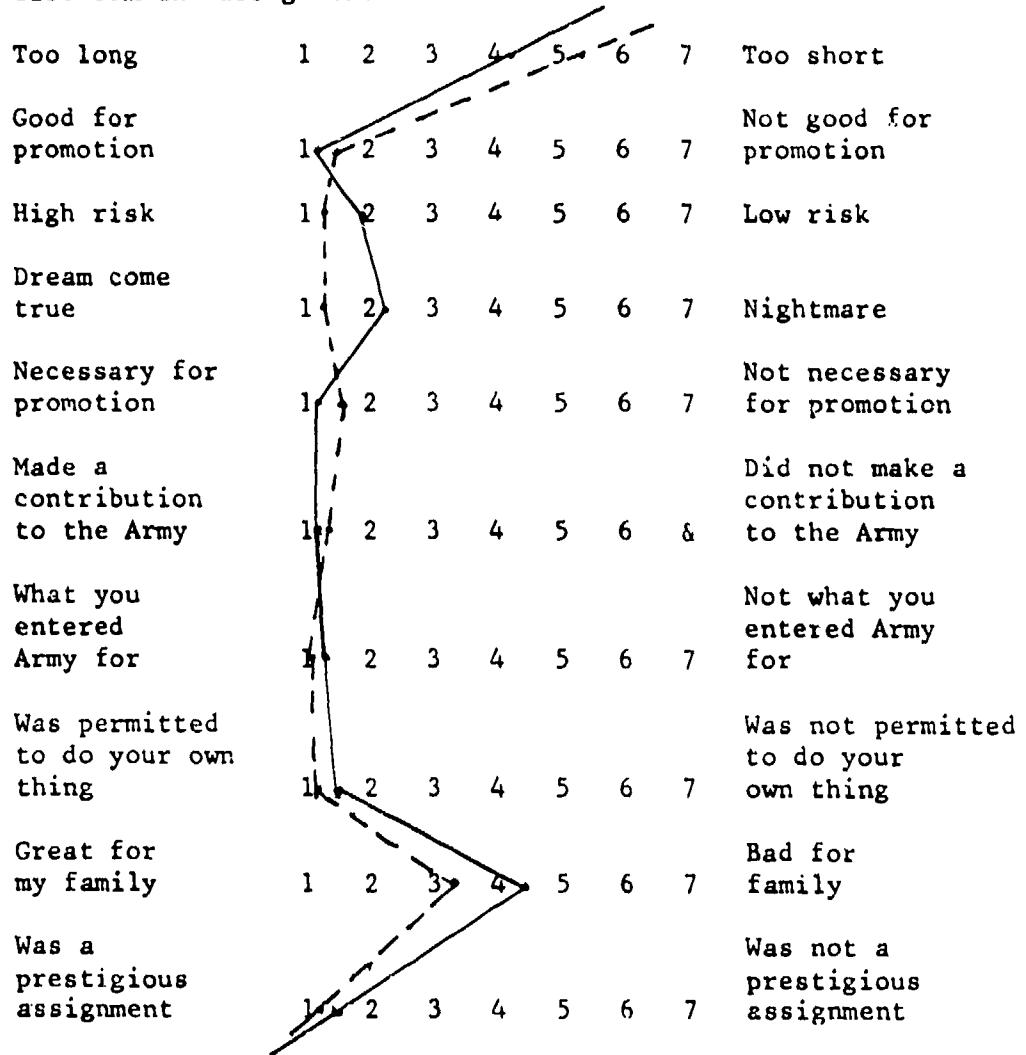
<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
5.1	No Comment	26.4
5.1	Secondary ASI	5.3
73.0	Command/Leadership	52.6
16.8	DA/MACOM Staff	15.8

Should the Centralized Command Selection System be modified to permit
MACOM Commanders to have more influence in the slating of selectees for
specific commands?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
13.9	Definitely Not	15.8
19.7	Probably Not	15.8
11.7	Not Sure	10.5
39.4	Probably Yes	31.6
15.3	Definitely Yes	26.3

06 PROFILE

Indicate the position on the scale that best represents your feelings about your last command assignment.



- - - - - ACCEPTED

— — — DECLINED

FINDINGS FOR 05 RESPONDENTS

GENERAL

There were 494 lieutenant colonel command positions available in FY 79. Surveys were mailed to 604 lieutenant colonels who were tendered command either as primary or alternate selectees. Four hundred and fifty-eight responded reflecting a 76 percent response.

Data provided by MILPERCEN revealed that 51 lieutenant colonels declined command during FY 79 giving a declination rate of 10 percent. Of the 458 individuals who responded, 41 (9 percent) indicated that they declined command. The response from those who declined command was 80 percent. The following specific results relate only to 05 acceptees and declinees.

SPECIFICS

Source of Commission.

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
19.2%	Service Academy	22.5%
61.8%	ROTC	65.0%
16.3%	OCS	10.0%
2.6%	Direct/Other	2.5%

Comment: Percentages provided for general information only.

Median Years of Commissioned Service.

<u>ACCEPTED</u>	<u>DECLINED</u>
17.8	18.5

Median Number of Family Members Living with You.

3.1	3.0
-----	-----

Median Number of Family Relocations During Last Ten Years.

ACCEPTED

5.6

DECLINED

4.6

Highest Civilian/Military Education Level Completed.

Comment: 72 percent of both categories reflected completion of a graduate degree program. All of the respondents with one exception had completed C&GSC.

Primary or Alternate Selectee for Command.

Comment: 80 percent of the acceptees indicated primary selectee for command; whereas 65 percent of the declinees so indicated.

I was selected for command the (circle one) 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th, 5th time

I was considered by a command selection board.

ACCEPTED

60.3

1st

DECLINED

57.5

27.3

2nd

15.5

9.5

3rd

20.0

Number of below the zone selections.

ACCEPTED

63.0

None

DECLINED

88.0

27.0

One

5.0

10.0

Two

7.0

Comment: No trend can be identified; however, 27 percent of the acceptees had received at least one advanced promotion as compared with 5 percent of the declinees.

Median years since last troop experience.

ACCEPTED

3.1

DECLINED

5.2

Comment: Two years difference since last troop experience was noted.

Type of unit for which selected.

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
77.6	TOE	72.5
21.9	TDA	25.0

Selected to command in entry or alternate specialty.

Comments: 80 percent of the selectees were nominated to command in their entry or primary specialty.

Initially declined command.

Not applicable, I accepted.

Prior to being selected.

After being selected, but before being slated.

After being slated for a specific unit.

Comment: Responses from declinants reflected that 22.5 percent declined after being selected but before being slated; whereas, 70 percent declined after being slated for a specific command. It appears that the unit slated for was a factor in the decision to decline.

Primary reason for declining command.

Personal 5%

Professional 5%

Family 7.5%

Combination of factors 70%

Other reasons 5%

Comment: The remainder of the responses were out of range of measureable values.

How did command fit in with your personal goals at the time of selection?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
.5	Very negative	7.5
4.1	Negative	25.0
5.8	Neutral	25.0
22.9	Positive	22.5
66.7	Very Positive	20.0

Comment: There were insufficient written comments to draw any conclusion for the variance in this area. The declinees were more negative (32.5 percent) than those who accepted (4.4 percent).

What was the influence of your previous command experience on your decision to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
.5	Strong to Decline	2.5
4.1	Moderate to Decline	5.0
5.8	Neutral	30.0
22.9	Moderate to Accept	27.5
66.7	Strong to Accept	35.0

Do you plan to retire within the next year?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
6.0	Yes	45.0
94.0	No	55.0

Had you decided to retire when you were selected for command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
9.0	Yes	35.0
91.0	No	65.0

Comment: Of interest to note that 9 percent of those who accepted command and 35 percent of those who declined nomination had already decided to retire.

Did your personal health influence your decision to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
9.0	Yes	5.0
91.0	No	95.0

Did the command tour length influence your decision to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
0	Strong to Decline	5.0
3.4	Moderate to Decline	0
77.9	Neutral	90.0
10.5	Moderate to Accept	5.0
8.3	Strong to Accept	0

Did the geographical location of the command influence your decision to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
1.7	Strong to Decline	20.0
8.3	Moderate to Decline	27.5
58.9	Neutral	37.5
15.8	Moderate to Accept	10.0
15.3	Strong to Accept	5.0

Did your notion of the 06/05 level command environment affect your decision to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
1.9	Strong to Decline	20.0
11.9	Moderate to Decline	15.0
42.6	Neutral	42.5
22.6	Moderate to Accept	17.5
20.9	Strong to Accept	5.0

How important was the timing of the offer of command in your decision
to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
1.7	Strong to Decline	20.0
8.3	Moderate to Decline	27.5
58.9	Neutral	37.5
15.8	Moderate to Accept	10.0
15.3	Strong to Accept	5.0

Did your notion of the 06/05 level command environment affect your
decision to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
1.9	Strong to Decline	20.0
11.9	Moderate to Decline	15.0
42.6	Neutral	42.5
22.6	Moderate to Accept	17.5
20.9	Strong to Accept	5.0

How important was the timing of the offer of command in your decision
to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
2.9	Strong to Decline	40.0
8.8	Moderate to Decline	40.0
42.6	Neutral	15.0
20.4	Moderate to Accept	5.0
25.3	Strong to Accept	0

Did the type of command (e.g., entry specialty vs other specialty)
influence your decision to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
1.0	Strong to Decline	12.5
3.2	Moderate to Decline	7.5
43.1	Neutral	40.0
18.2	Moderate to Accept	7.5
34.5	Strong to Accept	32.5

How did the personality of the person or persons you would be working
for or with affect your decision to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
1.9	Strong to Decline	5.0
3.2	Moderate to Decline	7.5
75.9	Neutral	80.0
11.7	Moderate to Accept	2.5
7.3	Strong to Accept	5.0

How did the type of command (TRADOC, FORSCOM, DARCOM, etc.) influence
your decision to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
1.0	Strong to Decline	10.0
6.1	Moderate to Decline	10.0
44.3	Neutral	52.5
20.9	Moderate to Accept	12.5
27.7	Strong to Accept	15.0

How adequate was your previous military training and experience in preparing you for the type of command for which you were selected?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
1.0	Very Adequate	10.0
5.8	Inadequate	5.0
4.4	Neutral	2.5
35.0	Adequate	27.5
53.5	Very Adequate	55.0

Did the presence of school-age family members in the household influence your decision to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
3.6	Strong to Decline	30.0
17.5	Moderate to Decline	35.0
54.7	Neutral	17.5
7.5	Moderate to Accept	0
3.6	Strong to Accept	0
12.7	N/A	17.5

Did the health of family members influence your decision to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
.2	Strong to Decline	22.5
4.1	Moderate to Decline	12.5
87.6	Neutral	62.5
4.4	Moderate to Accept	2.5
3.4	Strong to Accept	0

Did your wife's employment influence your decision to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
2.2	Strong to Decline	15.0
8.8	Moderate to Decline	10.0
51.6	Neutral	47.5
1.9	Moderate to Accept	0
1.2	Strong to Accept	2.5
34.1	N/A	25.0

What is your immediate family's attitude toward the Army?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
2.4	Very Negative	10.0
12.2	Negative	10.0
9.0	Neutral	10.0
46.0	Positive	40.0
30.4	Very Positive	30.0

What was your immediate family's attitude toward your being a commander at the time of your selection?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
1.9	Very Negative	7.5
8.8	Negative	17.5
10.7	Neutral	20.0
36.5	Positive	30.0
42.1	Very Positive	25.0

Did your family directly influence your decision to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
52.0	Toward Accepting	10.0
7.0	Toward Declining	55.0
40.0	Not at All	35.0

How did owning a home influence your decision to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
3.9	Strong to Decline	10.0
11.2	Moderate to Decline	30.0
51.6	Neutral	37.5
.7	Moderate to Accept	0
1.7	Strong to Accept	0
30.7	N/A	22.5

Did the number of relocations your family has made influence your decision to accept or decline command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
3.6	Strong to Decline	15.0
17.3	Moderate to Decline	40.0
62.3	Neutral	42.0
2.9	Moderate to Accept	0
1.0	Strong to Accept	0
12.9	N/A	2.5

Indicate your perception regarding your chances for promotion to the next grade if you decline command.

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
Lower than Most		
27.0	1	37.5
24.6	2	20.0
21.9	3	17.5
Same as Peers		
12.4	4	10.0
7.1	5	5.0
4.4	6	2.5
Higher than Most		
1.7	7	0
.7	8	2.5
.2	9	5.0

Indicate your perception regarding your chances for promotion to the next grade if you accept command.

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
Lower than Most		
.2	1	0
.5	2	0
0	3	0
Same as Peers		
0	4	0
5.8	5	0
9.0	6	7.5

Higher than Most

27.0	7	7.5
35.3	8	50.0
21.7	9	35.0

If promotion potential to the next grade would be equal, would you prefer a command or a noncommand job?

Comment: 88 percent of the acceptees indicated desire for a command assignment while 70 percent of the declinees stated a desire for a command assignment. It is interesting to note that 11 percent of the acceptees indicated a desire for a noncommand assignment while 30 percent of the declinees so indicated.

Have those factors which influenced your decision to accept or decline command changed since you made your decision?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
55.7	Not at All	65.0
15.6	Slightly	15.0
16.8	Moderately	12.5
8.0	Greatly	2.5
3.6	Very greatly	5.0

If you were permitted at this time to reconsider your decision to accept or decline command, would your decision be different?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
62.0	Definitely Not	52.5
20.4	Probably Not	25.0
6.6	Not Sure	10.0
6.6	Probably Yes	10.0
3.9	Definitely Yes	2.5

Should officers be permitted to decline consideration for command without adversely affecting subsequent personnel decisions?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
20.0	Definitely Not	7.5
24.6	Probably Not	10.0
4.6	Not Sure	2.5
20.9	Probably Yes	22.5
29.7	Definitely Yes	57.5

Should an officer be allowed to decline command without prejudice after being slated for a particular command?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
27.0	Definitely Not	15.0
31.4	Probably Not	10.0
6.3	Not Sure	7.5
15.8	Probably Yes	27.5
18.2	Definitely Yes	40.0

How do you feel about publication of the Centralized Command Selection List?

Comment: 67.5 percent of those who declined and 83.3 percent of those who accepted indicated a preference for publishing the command list.

Indicate your perception regarding the Centralized Command Selection System (CCSS) vs the "Old Boy Net" for selecting commanders.

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
Old Boy Net Best		
1.9	1	2.5
.5	2	0
2.7	3	0

Both the Same

1.7	4	10.0
5.4	5	2.5
5.6	6	2.5

CCSS Best

16.1	7	22.5
23.4	8	12.5
42.1	9	47.5

Would you have accepted command if you knew that the tour length would be 30 months + 6 months?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
68.1	Yes	15.0
22.1	Not Sure	35.0
9.7	No	50.0

Indicate types of assignments that would enable you to make the greatest contribution to the total Army effort.

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
8.0	No Comment	22.5
4.9	Secondary ASI	27.5
64.2	Command/Leadership	22.5
22.9	DA/MACOM Staff	27.5

Did you decline command because you believed that you could make a greater contribution to the Army in a noncommand job?

Comment: 25 percent of the respondents who declined indicated that they declined command because they believed they could make a greater contribution in a noncommand job.

Indicate your feeling about the recently announced command tour length.

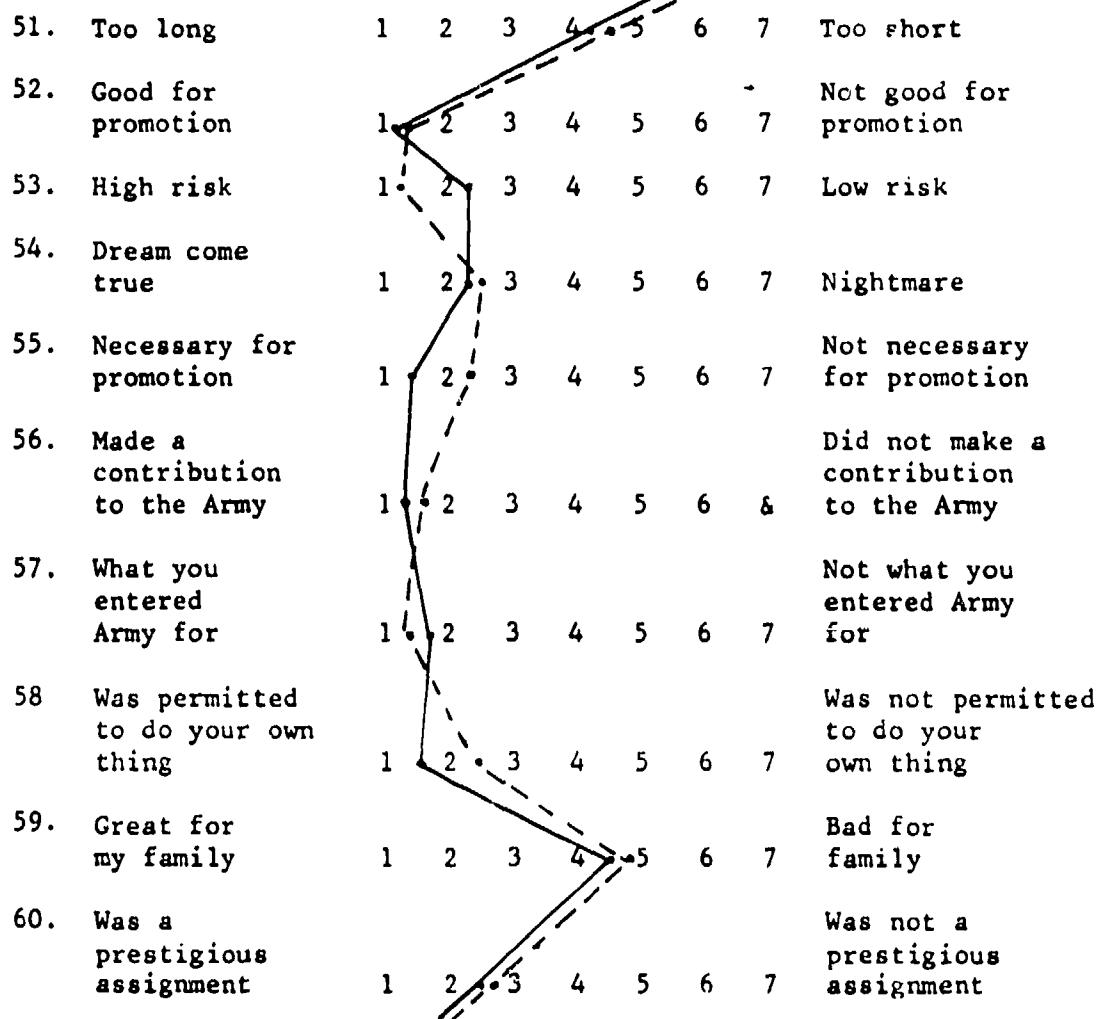
<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
12.9	Very Negative	10.0
26.5	Negative	27.5
12.2	Neutral	15.0
26.0	Positive	35.0
21.9	Very Positive	12.5

Should the Centralized Command Selection System be modified to permit
MACOM Commanders to have more influence in the slating of selectees for
specific commands?

<u>ACCEPTED</u>		<u>DECLINED</u>
19.2	Definitely Not	25.0
28.5	Probably Yes	17.5
13.1	Not Sure	17.5
29.4	Probably Yes	27.5
9.2	Definitely Yes	10.0

05 PROFILE

Indicate the position on the scale that best represents your feelings about your last command assignment.



- - - - - ACCEPTED

— DECLINED

CHAPTER IV

COMMENTS

GENERAL

Respondents were asked to state any specific comments regarding why they believed officers decline command. Replies from those officers who declined command have been listed separately and by grade. Comments from those respondents who indicated that they accepted command are representative of those received and are not broken out by grade.

06 DECLINATION COMMENTS

"My health was the only reason for declining command."

"My declination occurred because I was named to command an organization for which I was already the Deputy Commander. I did not want to assume command of an organization after being its number two man for a period of two years, since I would have accomplished most of my contributions during that time."

"I declined command because I was not accepted by the MACOM to which I was slated. I was then offered a different command in the same MACOM and declined."

"I was selected for CMD in Europe. Told assignment officer I would not return for a 4th tour. Volunteered for CMD in Korea. Turned down & removed from CMD list."

"I wanted a troop command not a District Engineer assignment. This was the main reason I went ahead with plans to retire rather than spend 3 years away from my family as a District Engineer."

"I was convinced that because of my year group (1954) that I had very little chance of promotion. Thus, I preferred to retire and embark upon a second career rather than continue in what seemed to be a dead end situation (no further promotions nor increased job responsibility/satisfaction). PCS costs would have resulted in significant loss of take home pay (due to housing costs). Also my command selection was in TDA unit."

"I declined command because I was slated to command a non-operational, watch dog type unit which consisted of 130 people who had nothing to do except monitor US equipment in a foreign country. I did not grow up in the Army to command that. A Col was required only because the host country had a colonel on the compound. The position should never have been on the command list since a number of quality colonels declined subsequent to my declination."

"I was the senior signal officer on the FY 78 command list which came out early in 1978. That meant that the timing was more critical for me than for any other signal officer if I were to have a reasonable 'primary zone' chance of consideration for promotion to BG. That notwithstanding, while the most junior LTC(P) was first assigned, even before FY 79 started, I was slated last to report in July-August 79, the end of the year. As I was preparing to close out my present assignment and leave for command, the CSA decided the BG "window" for the Aug/Sep 79 O-7 board would move on past my year group. That meant that by the time I had an OER from CMD in the file before a board, my yeargroup(54) would have almost zero opportunity for promotion. Dislocating self and family overseas without any real opportunity to compete for promotion then became, to me, foolish. It would have been a nice ego trip, but not a very worthwhile one from a long-term personal standpoint."

"I believe a serious erosion of discipline has occurred in the Army for a number of reasons. It seriously impairs a commander's ability to mold an effective unit. I don't like centralized command selection at all, the Army is too big for that. It's like the General Motors president was handed his vice-presidency & told to make it run! I spent my last two years of active duty working for a successively command selected alcoholic who wouldn't have commanded once under the "old boy net" system. At least 3 command selected officers (including myself) declined mainly because they didn't care for such a system!"

"I declined command for 2 reasons: first, because I was selected in my last year of primary consideration for Brig Gen and it seemed that acceptance of command at that time in my career was counterproductive for my and the Army's best interests--particularly since the command was not a TOE combat command but rather a command in name only as a sop to Air Defense. Second, I had the option of accepting a more important and more responsible command, though this command is not currently recognized as a DA command with full equivalence. I declined command of the Air Defense Training Brigade at Ft Bliss, Texas, to accept command of the United States Army Garrison and Ft Myer Post, MDW. This accepted command is responsible for some 4000 troops in Washington Area including other MACOM personnel--as well as the Installation command duties of Ft Myer Post. I am personally convinced that MILPERCEN exercises a disproportionate share of Army responsibility both in selection process and the slating of commands. Had my former DIV CG not sat as the head of the board which selected me for command, I probably would not have been selected. Though an alternate the year previously, I was not advised of alternate selection and was not offered

command when one was vacated in Korea by MILPERCEN because I had been in a job in Belgium for only 12 months! The system needs thorough review at Army commanders level."

"The reasons for declining command were complex and interrelated, involving personal, family and professional environment and ethics, coupled with my perception of the inadequacies of the personnel management system and the failure of the Army to come to grips with the realities of the "VOLAR" environment, served to affirm a decision prompted primarily by personal concerns. In closing, I would note that my decision to forego the privilege of command--the goal of 23 years of honorable service--was not the result of anger, embitterment or disillusionment. It was a difficult--indeed painful--decision attended by the reality that my future as a professional soldier was now limited. So, proud of my service, I head towards retirement. (As an aside, altho' I was a primary selectee, an SSC grad and allegedly a "quality file," no one at MILPERCEN challenged my declination of command or even asked why in an official vein!!!)"

"I became disillusioned with the volunteer Army and the personnel system. I was selected for command, subsequently notified that I would command the 1st DivArty in Zindorf, Germany--the same kaserne that I had served as a battery commander 15 years prior. My family & I were excited and anxious to go. Subsequently, MILPERCEN started playing games--there was a shakeup of commanders (accepted because of Bob Baska's death) and a TWX went to Europe saying I agreed to delay command for almost a year. When the TWX went out, I was not even aware that my command tour was being adjusted. MILPERCEN subsequently began to CYA and, in my honest opinion, misrepresented the facts both to USAREUR and to me. MILPERCEN has become

too all-powerful to the detriment of local commanders!"

"I had also become disappointed with senior military "leaders'" failure to stand up and tell it like it is to Congress and to the public. Several other breakdowns in acceptance of responsibility also influenced my retirement."

"I do not wish this to sound bitter--I loved the Army, it was good to me and to my family and under different circumstances I would have eagerly accepted the responsibilities of command. I also have no objection to my name or circumstances being used and would be more than happy to talk with anyone that wanted to pursue the matter."

"Declination of command runs contrary to every principle ingrained in my sense of professionalism. Command is and must be the basis for officer service to the Army. Selection for O-6 command should represent the formal recognition of a colonel's potential to provide critical service not only as an O-6 commander but of future significant contributions. The result of critical analysis in terms of this ideal serves as a basis for my decision."

"When OPMS was adopted MILPERCEN briefing officers travelled throughout the world spreading the knowledge of OPMS. The concept as I understood it espoused that professional development was designed to optimize officer utilization at the O-6 level. Command, high-level staff, and staff direction assignments were the keystones of O-6 utilization."

"In analyzing military police officer professional development and utilization, it becomes abundantly clear that the precepts of OPMS have not been developed with appropriate assignment opportunities. A military police colonel selected for command, especially due to the limited number of military police O-6 commands, should represent the cream of the MP Corp."

According to OPMS, following command he should be the earmarked agent for critical service. The reality, however, is that upon completion of command, an O-6 military police officer has no critical utilization opportunity. Historically, military police officers are not considered for positions as Post Commander, Assistant Division/Corps Commander, Chief of Staff, G-1, G-3, or equivalent roles. I perceive that regardless of my qualifications to serve in these type positions, it is a foregone conclusion that I shall not, qualifications notwithstanding and this is dictated by branch and unspoken politics.

"Military Police officers instead are relegated to perceived "retirement" positions as Army Provost Marshals with a minimal staff, directorships at a service school, or other type positions that in no way takes advantage of the expertise, experience or acquired command knowledge. With the reduction of General Officer billets in the Military Police Corps, consideration for promotion beyond O-6 is further limited since historically, military police officers have not been selected for star billets outside the military police structure. As an example, the Commanding General and Deputy Commanding General at Fort McClellan, Alabama, "home" of the Military Police School are not Military Police basic branch. Why? Having spent my entire career where "the rubber meets the road," I have extreme difficulty in developing or understanding the rationale for these actions, and as importantly explaining this to loyal, dedicated and highly professional Military Police junior officers.

"My declination of command could have been accomplished in a far more inconspicuous manner. However, to have followed such a course would have been basically disloyal and served no constructive purpose. Mine is not a

call for self-serving consideration but rather a call for a systemic rethinking to allow all officers, regardless of branch or specialty affiliation, to be judged on their experience and potential with consideration given to all for advanced service beyond O-6 command. The problem I raise is one of equal treatment throughout the Army. Many O-6s want to serve. They have dedicated their lives to this pursuit and deprivation due to the collar brass worn is a demoralizing state of affairs. A state of affairs I hope my junior officers will not have to face.

Based on these facts and my perception of a lack of challenging position prospects upon completion of command, I have decided to decline command. If this declination contributes in any way to an examination/change of MP officer professional development and utilization, then my purpose will have been served."

05 DECLINATION COMMENTS

"Command selection would have pulled me away from my preferred field of project management."

"So after selling house in Georgia and a house in . . . to scrape up enough money to buy a house in the D.C. area I came out on the primary list for command. Branch promptly slated me back to Georgia. Rationale: an 'agreement' between MILPERCEN and TRADOC gives a 'percentage' to TRADOC. I was part of the 'contribution'."

"The primary factor which influenced me was my perception of being relegated to insignificant assignments following command . . . The Army doesn't know what to do with (ex-commanders)."

"I spent my entire career preparing myself to command a signal battalion. I was offered a basic training command. NO THANK YOU."

"Terminally ill family member would have required a two-year unaccompanied tour."

"My specific reason is that I was given the distinct impression that I would be a CDR in name only, that my superior would handle the command aspects of the position. From my experience, this method is rapidly becoming the rule rather than the exception. Family, house and other considerations were relatively unimportant."

"If the Army is going to select its best to command, they shouldn't be offered a choice. Like any other job in the military you either accept it or get out! To me allowing one to turn down command is putting the desires of the individual above the needs of the Service."

"In my case the timing of my activation from the alternate list was too late to change a long-standing commitment to fill a specific assignment."

"Four months after I declined command I was passed over for RA LTC . . . OPMS seems to work for those who have their tickets punched. I felt I could be of more value to the Army in logistics rather than commanding a BCT Bn . . . it appears I was wrong!"

"I was finishing a 3 year tour in a P&A Bn when I was selected to command a BCT Bn, which had 60 percent female trainees. Also the assignment would have meant 4 plus years of straight troop duty. If there had been any break between the assignments I would have accepted--even though I had great misgivings about trying to command such a unit!"

"On station only four months when list announced, after 17 month separation (12 months Korea--5 months school) with PCS effective six months later. System would not bend . . . Selection system too inflexible. A two year hold (asked for and refused) could have put things in a different light."

"My primary reason for requesting a deferment was related to timing . . . I was on the alternate list and was given 6 weeks to clear S.H.A.P.E. and report to Ft Knox."

"At the time of declining Command I was working for the sorriest S.O.B. to ever wear a uniform. He totally destroyed the desire and dedication I had to be a CDR. I have retired from active service."

"When I called my commander-to-be to explain that my family wouldn't be able to accompany me immediately or be there for the change of command ceremony, I was told that he 'advised' against my family's absence, would try to support my position, but said that I'd be 'starting out under a cloud'. The last straw came when my reserved B.O.Q. room suddenly became unavailable, but (was told) I could move into the troop billets if local apartments were too expensive!!!"

"Never planned on a career past 20 years. Very definite plans for another career after 20 years. I believe Bn CMD is at a premium and should be filled by officers who plan on a longer and more productive career."

"Timing."

"I am a Reserve officer with mandatory retirement 90 days after completion of command. Not worth it with possible mandatory retirement right afterwards."

"Lack of job satisfaction . . . continued erosion of pay and benefits . . . the period I was selected for command overran my selected date of retirement by 6 months . . ."

"For family medical reasons, I knew that a time would come when I would have to choose between my family and career. To preclude that dilemma I declined command (regrettably). I feel that I destroyed any chance of making O-6 so I will retire ASPP . . ."

"The CG of MILPERCEN . . . should consider the needs of and the stated desires of the selected officer. When an officer has spent most of the past 6 years away from his family and has been TDY 43 weeks per year for the past 3 years, it is not a good time to take a TANK Bn in Germany."

"I requested removal from Bn Cmd after having commanded 4 months. I sought to operate in an open, forthright, outspoken manner. I made recommendations for change in policy that were rejected; I voiced opposition to some practices I felt were morally & professionally incorrect & I was stifled. My immediate superior held me to be a "boat-rocker" and disruptive to his command. He warned me to change my leadership style or he would have me relieved. Realizing that a yes-man was wanted and knowing my personality could not be changed I requested removal in the best interests of all concerned. The Div CG granted my request with regret."

"Command was offered in Europe immediately following a three-year tour in Europe. Six continuous years in Europe was not in the best interests of my family. Accepting command under these circumstances would have caused some undesirable results, e.g., marriage, children's education, being out of the housing market, and perhaps poor performance as a CDR."

05/06 ACCEPTEES COMMENTS

"Uncertainty of what to expect and inability to control your own priorities and objectives."

"Lack of time to devote to pressing family needs--impact differs depending on family's status of school, health, strength of marriage, discipline, etc. Command came at a good time for me, otherwise I may not have accepted."

"Major reason for declinations is family or financially motivated rather than fear of the high risk environment."

"Critical shortages of NCOs, severe shortages of personnel, ancient equipment which has suffered years of abuse and neglect combined with unrealistic missions, poor organization for training, and training distractions have made command somewhat less rewarding and satisfying than I had anticipated. If offered Bde level command in _____ I am not sure that I would accept."

"Command realities remain opposite to Army goals, leadership instruction and rosy rhetoric. Command realities stress control, no embarrassment, little incentive to innovate, inflexible regulations, and bungling bureaucracy."

"Little emphasis on training--emphasis is on statistics and unimportant data."

"It is now not profitable to stay in the Army past 20 years. It creates a financial hardship on our families. Every year we are losing money."

"Most officers are influenced by the command environment of their last command."

"Officers are now seeing that they can make O6 without command and are willing to do so and not face the demands on the individual and family. Additionally, it appears more RA officers are retiring after 20 years and don't want to command if they are not staying in."

"Frustration at not being able to do what you want; treatment from higher commanders--always looking at negative items; pressure to always succeed; danger of having a serious incident occur that the commander is responsible for because he failed to follow one of the million ARs thrown at him; no sense of humor."

"In the past 10 years our basic pay has declined to the extent that there is less reason to remain on active duty past 20 years."

"I perceive command will become increasingly a high risk, low payoff assignment. In retrospect, I should have declined command, misread signals, came anyway to _____ where I was not wanted. The _____ commander tried without success to prevent my assignment."

"I really think the most significant reason for command declinations is the perception that it is not worth the hassle, the ulcers, the long hours, and the time away from family. I also believe that the emphasis on OPMS options have encouraged people to decline."

"There is a price for anything worth doing. Some simply do not want to pay."

"Those who decline should get out! They are unwilling to place their reputation on the line on a day by day basis and, therefore must doubt their ability to perform under pressure."

"I think officers coming out on command lists should have more of an opportunity to get the command they want."

"Some officers are not troop oriented and know it. Their strengths rest in staff type positions. A truly dedicated and honest officer will know this and this will directly affect declination considerations."

"Most officers I have known who have declined command have announced their plans to retire as soon as they are eligible. Many places the commanders get too much help. Many brigade and division commanders spend time maneuvering squads and individuals and not do their job. When they do their job, command is a great job."

"Do more with less and less. Additionally, the Centralized Selection System is great; however, the Branch still takes care of the chosen few when it comes time to decide who commands what."

"Although extremely gratifying, the risks are high and yet I receive no more pay or compensation than an O5 teaching ROTC. However, I do feel promotion potential is greatly enhanced by command."

"Dissatisfaction with command for which slated by MILPERCEN."

"My specialty does not require command and if the Army is serious about OPMS then there is no requirement for me to command. Will believe in OPMS when CG of DARCOM is a CSS officer."

"Too many selfish officers like ego trip of selection but avoid hard work and reality of command."

"Command is currently a catch 23. Must be highly competitive (better than peers); but by perception is that it is a high risk situation--succeed=O6; fail=retire at O5; but my peers, without command can still achieve O6."

"Commanders are faced with the dilemma of inadequate resources and rapidly increasing requirements. Our centralized management discourages initiative, protects substandard performers and blames the commander for all deficiencies."

"Having a command under a loser is not worth your time and sacrifice. Going from Bn XO to Bn Cdr or quickly from Bn command to Bde command is too much of the same thing. Both the officer and his family need a break."

"My contemporaries place more emphasis on family impact than did commanders of 10 years ago."

"Micromanagement by MACOMs including DA."

"Decline in prestige in being an officer and a commander."

"I accepted command. Had I fully realized the environment in which I would be operating, I would have declined regardless of the impact on future promotion opportunities."

"I accepted command for the challenge, opportunity to directly influence young soldiers, desire to lead and not follow."

"Some officers decline command because they are slotted in commands they are not qualified for. Officers slated for command should be solicited as to their desires as to type command and location."

"One of my officers declined command because he was given a TDA Bn instead of a TOE Bn."

"The Army has not established a credible reason to stay on active duty for longer than the time required to get the best economic trade-off between active duty salary, retirement income, and free market value in the post retirement job market. For most of us, that trade-off point comes as 20 years for a LTC, or 2 years after making O6. This fact impacts on the decision to accept or decline command as does the fact of a reluctance of wives to go through many of the drills that go with being the COMMANDER'S WIFE."

"If you are selected for command based on a good record and fail, a good career is terminated."

"OPMS is starting to work, command is not the only route."

"We have taken most of the fun out of command."

"Mission-resource mismatch."

"Because of personal hardship, especially the requirement to uproot family, I accepted command in Korea. I would have declined command in Europe because of family considerations."

"Officer corps more self-centered now."

"To decline command is to choose family over job."

"I am retiring after 1 year in command because aspirations and expectations were not met. Also, job satisfaction is lacking."

"I believe many good officers are declining command because they disagree with the Volunteer Army concept."

"The desire for family stability, financial equity of home ownership in an inflated economy, and a why-should-I-risk-my-career mentality."

"The long hours I have worked has had a significantly adverse impact on my family. I can't wait to relinquish command."

"Tour length. Although I gave little thought to an 18 month command tour length, I would have to give considerable thought to a 30 month tour."

"School and housing situations in Europe. I would have declined command there."

"Loss of interest in soldiering, perhaps brought on by declining physical capabilities."

"If I could do it, without jeopardizing my career, I'd give up command tomorrow."

"Not enough consideration of effect on family by DA."

"Afraid of failure."

"Down deep, they really don't want to be bothered. I believe more will decline in face of the increased tour length."

"A majority of those selected for command don't have aspirations for stars, therefore the disadvantages outweigh the advantages."

"As an O6 in the Pentagon I observed O5s receiving _____ Welcome to Ft Benning letters which said while at Benning you will be judged on following statistical reports . . . and wife will play a major role in your success. Several who received these letters said forget it. I too would have done so."

"Some officers are really afraid of dealing with the soldier and his problems."

"Too much incorrect bad publicity about command."

"The dictatorial method utilized by MILPERCEN to assign officers to command positions causes numerous personnel to decline command."

"Family dislocations too soon after another simply because your name comes up on command list (e.g., I left Europe in Aug 76, came out on cmd list in Feb 77 to move in Oct 77 after buying house in DC.)"

"I believe the negative image of command climate and the view that too many senior commanders are self-centered and unsupportive of subordinates are the driving factors."

"Failure of the system to identify those who do not desire command causing the board to consider uninterested eligibles."

"I accepted an assignment which just happens to be a command."

"My family is tired of making sacrifices and I am beginning to listen to their reasons. Assuming promotion to 06, I would probably decline command."

"Many accept command solely because they're expected to and see damage to career if they decline."

"Had already served 2 years on a 3 year overseas assignment. Had to extend my tour to 4 years total. Would have preferred to return to CONUS. Chose to accept so as not to burn my bridges."

"Command at the 06 level is generally a piece of cake. I believe those who decline do so for strong family or financial reasons. My wallet would be a lot healthier if I declined--but not my self-esteem."

"Why leave a secure clean staff job for command, especially if you can obtain your objective without it."

"Biggest reason for declination of command is perceived hassle and disruption of stable family life."

"Rewards are not proportionate to the enormous increase in responsibilities involved in command nor worth the family hardships which are inherent. Many O6s who accept, like myself, are principally influenced by their desire to improve their chances for promotion to O6."

"I did not decline but seriously considered it because it cut an expected 3 year tour short."

"Good civilian job offers for logistics and specialty trained officers that can be taken while still drawing retirement pay which will make their families standard of living higher and help defray dependents college education costs."

"With O6 possible without Bn command, some take the easy way out."

"Spouse apprehensive about DISTAFF pressures."

"It should be obvious that family factors are negative. As I see trends, more O6s will be selected for command later in their careers, and are more inclined to opt for retirement or stay in place followed by retirement."

"Command requires a financial and family sacrifice and really offers very little except job satisfaction in return."

"Family turbulence, responsibility to family, and family economics."

"Too much careerism among O5s and O6s."

"Not impressed with the treatment that follows successful command-- even more short duration assignments, a succession of pressure packed jobs."

"My desire to command almost cost me my marriage."

"If we really believe in OPMS and specialties, then not all should command nor should we think that all should want to command."

"Promotion boards and school selection boards results have indicated that without successful command, advancement chances sharply decline."

"Timing is a major factor---especially if you are activated off the alternate list. You get the feeling that you're cannon fodder."

"Station and family understanding were the major factors causing me to accept. If either had been different I would have declined command."

"Zero defects is alive and well. The can-do-anything philosophy lives. The hypocrisy which surrounds these two related areas turns many conscientious officers off."

"O5 level command is normally offered at a time when we are forced with a painful decision of whether to ignore your family (teenagers) and drive on for a successful military career or reestablish communications with your children at critical stages in their lives and sacrifice (forget) your military ambitions. I think those who turn down command do so in order to fulfill their family responsibility."

"There is no real benefit to commanding except increased promotion opportunity and SSC selection."

"Perhaps the cautious should be applauded for their honesty. It may be a mark of the return of professional integrity supplanting the alleged unbounded careerism thought to exist a decade ago. Perhaps the body of believers in OPMS has grown as reflected by increased command declinations.

"The slating process is much too impersonal."

"The price we pay for selling OPMS."

"If my assignment had been to a location other than Korea I would have declined command for family reasons."

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

A general trend appears throughout the comments offered by O6s who declined command in FY 79 . . . failure of the personnel management system to satisfy the aims and objectives of these senior officers. Albeit a small group, they were the target audience for the study. Their discontent ranged from being offered command too late for consideration for promotion, to a belief that meaningful assignments are not available following command. There was also a general feeling that the personnel managers have been impersonal and, on occasion, deceitful.

Comments from O5s who declined command in FY 79 reflect the same personnel management problems and attitudes as cited by the O6s who declined. In particular, there is a marked trend of impersonal relations between the selected individual and MILPERCEN.

There was considerable variance between the rationale provided by those officers who declined command and the expressed perceptions of those officers who accepted regarding why officers decline command. The most repeated perception related to the perceived adverse impact of command on the family. Other perceptions included a perceived imbalance in the price to pay versus the satisfaction of being a commander, poor timing of the offer of command, high risk of command, financial expense of command, fear of failure, opportunity to be promoted to O6 without command, inability to influence the slating process, and commitment to a 20-year retirement. A number of the respondents indicate dissatisfaction with command.

The following conclusions are based on analyses of the statistical data:

-- Data base is too small to represent the total population and should serve as an initial collection effort.

-- The majority of declinations occurred after the nominee had been slated for a specific unit.

-- The geographical location appeared to be a major factor in the declination decision.

-- Timing of the offer of command was a major factor for declinations.

-- Command tour length at time of selection did not statistically appear to be a major declination factor.

-- Home ownership appeared to have moderate influence on the decision to decline.

-- Family attitude toward the Army as a way of life was mainly positive.

-- Seventy-two percent of 05 declinees had been slated for TO&E units.

-- Sixty-three percent of 06 declinees had been slated for TDA units.

-- School-age family members were a major factor in 05 declination decisions.

-- Forty-two percent of 06 declinees and forty-five percent of 05 declinees stated an intent to retire within one year after selection.

-- A majority of the 06 respondents indicated a positive attitude toward the revised command tour length.

-- Most 05 respondents indicated that officers should be allowed to decline consideration for command without prejudice.

-- A majority of 06 respondents indicated that an officer should not be allowed to decline command after being slated for a particular unit.

-- Most respondents agreed that the CCSS is an improvement over the previous command selection procedure and that the selection list should be published.

CHAPTER VI

RECOMMENDATIONS

- That the study be continued using subsequent command nominees.
- That MILPERCEN investigate the possibility of changing the current slating process to allow selected officer input.
- That DCSPER review the comments provided with a view towards improving the perception of the personnel management system.
- That the follow-on study investigate the impact of command declinations on the future quality of commanders to determine if we will be placing the second team in the field as commanders.

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